

*****Mas-----Sus-----!*****

To Subscribe: Send \$1.50 per issue (up to \$18) to Jeff Mullins, P.O. Box 36189, San Jose, CA 95158

"If you are a reporter covering wrestling and you ignore something different, something that is successful--or you close your mind to the fact that wrestling always changes, then that's the day that the business has passed you by."

-- Roughly translated from an editorial (concerning underground newsletter coverage of Mexico's AAA-Lucha Libre promotion) by Dave Meltzer in the 4/4/94 *Wrestling Observer Newsletter*.

(SNS -- Sushi News Service Story)

Tragic news from the Lucha front!

COCO LOCO, MEXICO -- According to Mexican match reporter Steve "Dr. Loocha" Seems, mini-wrestler Octogoncito has survived six-hours of emergency surgery here, after being struck by a large object thrown from the audience during his wild 5/27 AAA-TripleMania II-C singles match against Jerrito Estrada in Tijuana-by-the-Sea.

According to Simms, the popular dwarf luchadore, known as "el idolocito el los ninocitos" (the pintsized hero of pintsized children) was in the middle of a spectacular double moonsault when a heavily loaded diaper, intended for Estrada, hit Octogoncito right between the eyes.

Because the diaper was thrown with such force, becoming so deeply embeded in Octogoncito's forehead, surgeons were unable to remove any of the diaper (nor any of the load) for fear of causing permanent brain, nasal, and ocular damage.

According to AAA's Antonio Pena, if and when the gutsy midget returns to the ring (loaded diaper-implant and all), the Octogoncito gimmick will have to be dropped, and the "leetle steenker" will wrestle as "Meester PooPeeto Face," whose major new move, of course, will be known as the "Squeeshee Headbutt" or "Montazumaaaaa's Revennnnnge!"

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(SNS -- Sushi News Service)

WWF grappler in big casket mix-up!

YERBA LINDA, CA -- "Yeah, it was kind of freaky," said Mark Calloway, an employee of the World Wrestling Federation (WWF), who (as a tall, menacing, red-headed wrestling character known as the Undertaker) had fallen asleep in his "trademark" casket while wearing his black and grey ring outfit during a 4/26 publicity photo-shoot in Washington, D.C.

"I'm a very sound sleeper," said Calloway. "Ironically, I could sleep between a pair of roaring jet engines and a battery of cannons firing a 21-gun salute and I wouldn't wake up."

According to an embarrassed Calloway, somehow his large, gimmicked casket (with him sleeping soundly inside it) was accidentally flown by jet across the United States after a team of U.S. military coffin bearers--thinking they had picked up the casket containing the remains of former U.S. President Richard Nixon--inadvertantly placed the coffin containing The Undertaker aboard the U.S. Presidential aircraft known as Air Force One, which then flew the Undertaker, the "wrong" casket, and members of Nixon's grieving

family to Yerba Linda, California, for the burial.

(SNS--Sushi News Service will report further details about this heretofore unreported incident as soon as information becomes available!)

Hello, everyone!

Welcome to the continuing saga of life, liberty, and the pursuit of pro wrestling happiness here in the state-of-mind called Sushiland-near-Campbell-by-the-Sea. Please notice we've added a few more "letters" to our new name and gimmick up in the masthead on page one (have you guessed our name yet?!) which should be completely revealed after we've teased it a couple more issues. (Hey, what did you expect? No swerves?! This is a grap sheet, bubba, not an outting with the Vienna Boys Choir!)

For those who have heard rumors or are wondering what you're holding, I'm Jeff Mullins, former "heel" editor of an extremely controversial newsletter once called Son of Pro Wrestling ~~Sushi~~ Bashi, a sheet which, at various times during its brief but reputedly nefarious run, and before it became Mas_Sus_!, was regularly blamed for working rather "stiff," as well as for:

- * Causing extinction of dinosaurs, cooking up "Trojan Horse" screw-job endings during the Hellenic Wars, allowing Roman gladiators to use foreign objects, over the top rope, and pile-drivers against the Christians, telling King Louie that his idea for a new finishing move was a "show stopper," that it would be an excellent weapon to use against invading barbarians, and that he should name it "The Thesz Press."

- * Subsequently, causing Rome to fall, personally directing the spread of Black Plague and Dusty Rhodes' stomach across Medieval Europe, endorsing the Weaver Lock as a legitimate method for torturing heretics during the Inquisition.

- * Booking World Wars I and II (just so a lot of American boys could travel and see Death Matches in other parts of the world), and ensuring that one little sperm in particular--one from Vince McMahon Sr's testicles--got a special "push" in being first to reach the egg in a "King of the Fallopian Tube" tournament held inside Mrs. McMahon Sr's tummy (something we've really taken a lot of unfair heat for over the years!)

- * Dropping a highly radio-active bomb on Japan, on the night when 505-pound Sumo champion "Giant Baba" was making his first title defense, at the Hiroshima Dome, causing Baba to lose a lot of weight, and a lot of fans (but not the push!), and inventing call-waiting.

- * Yelling at Brutus Beefcake to "hang on!" instead of warning him to "let go!" only moments before he suffered his tragic "facial" accident when he para-glided into a naked woman (a big woman!) who, when she saw Beefcake coming, instead of doing a leap-frog to avoid colliding with him, she hit him square in the mush with a brutal Thesz Press (and afterwards, said to him, "Was it as good for you as if was for me-e-e, Bruti?") at Land O'Lakes, Florida, several years ago.

- * Using voo-doo or telekinesis to burst minor internal body organs of rival sheet editors, and, finally,

- * Advising the Mexican satellite TV station (the one that broadcasts Lucha Libre) to scramble it's signal, thereby drastically reducing the amount of Lucha TV programming available to dish owners in the United States, which (of course) caused one rabid Lucha Libre newsletter editor to change his name to "Daveeto," turn his sheet into an almost totally Spanish-language weekly, and move to Tijuana-by-the-Sea-in-Mexico where he now wears an Octagon mask whenever he goes to the beach for a jog, or to Mil Mascara's gym for some hangum an' bangum, or to the AAA Lucha cards where he and numero uno Americano rudo Art "Love Machine" Barr have a small, friendly, running wager...that if

Barr dies in the ring, it won't be from a plancha gone awry (or from dreenking the water), but from being creamed by a large and freshly loaded diaper launched from somewhere high up in the el cheepo seats!

(SNS -- Sushi News Service)

Nixon family's 'big' surprise

YERBA LINDA, CA -- "When Air Force One was flying over the Rockies, the high altitude was killing my ears," WWF wrestler Mark "The Undertaker" Calloway said about the Nixon casket mix-up and his own unplanned trip to the birthplace and funeral site of former U.S. President Richard Nixon.

The sharp pain in my ears awakened me, and I began pounding my fists against the inside of the coffen, yelling for whomever closed the lid, to open it!

"I can only guess how the other passengers and mourners who were sitting around the coffen reacted when they heard banging and a loud voice coming from inside the casket containing what they thought was the body of our nation's thirty-seventh President," Calloway said.

"Next thing I knew, the coffen lid was lifted, and when I looked up, I noticed that everyone looking down resembled either Richard Nixon or Ike.

[Editor's note: In consideration for members of President Nixon's immediate family, some of whom subscribe to this newsletter, we will not go into details regarding the looks on everyone's faces when The Undertaker-- still wearing his ring outfit--did the sit-up and asked Julie Nixon-Eisenhour for a stick of chewing gum.]

C'mon, gimme a break!

The old sheet, Son of Pro Rasslin Bashj wasn't that nasty, was it? It wasn't that evil, was it? Okay, okay? It was nasty. And at times, I guess, it was bad to the bone. But this new sheet is not nasty, not to brudders in the underground. Hey, look, "nsaty" is a word we can't even spell! A kinder, more gentle sheet are we...

(SNS)

'Big' disappointment for Undertaker fans at WWF show in D.C.

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Needless to say, on 4/26, when the casket containing The Undertaker was mistakenly flowen to California (instead of the coffen containing former President Richard M. Nixon), a large crowd of WWF fans back in Washington, D.C. were disappointed later that night when Undertaker's manager Paul Bearer dragged the "wrong" casket into the arena, pulled open the lid, and, of course, The Undertaker "no showed!"

Hallo, peeples! Nine an a half year old Jubie Jaycito here. All the stuff about our old sheet, about our old "feuds" with other sheet people like Ron Lemieux, Brian Tramel, Daveeto Meltzerito, and Lunch LeVine (where as they may still have serious problems with us), from our end, bruddahs, it's water under the bridge. History. Da feuds is over. (Well, maybe not all of 'em, since we've still got a few things to iron out with Lunch LeVine, uh...who is that shrink who helped the Menendez Brudders?) Anyway, the editor of this sheet has reformed. He's looked himself in the mirror. He's seen the error of his ways. (He's even changed the name of the sheet, a symbolic ~~jeeter~~ gesture for sure!) And all he wants is for people to know he had no part in all those horrible things that happened to dinosaurs, heretics, Baba, and the para-glider fella (who has so many pins, bolts, and metal plates in his head that his brain still picks up all the Lucha Libre "satellite" shows, whether they've been scrambled or not!) True, we were a bit mean-spirited back then. But not any more. All we ask is to be given a chance. Let my Unca Jeff prove he really isn't such a bad-ass after all, that he can put out a sheet without causing serious harm to people, without pushing friendships over the edge, without using voo-doo, or telekinesis, or the pencil that is mightier than the sword for the purposes of turning to ooze, wantonly exploding, or sheesh-ka-bobbing other people's internal organs! *Pleeeeeease!* Give him, us, *Mas__Sus__!* a chance! --Jubie Jaycito Payaso La Parka Perroqueeto Aguayo Mullins, Sushiland, CA

(SNS)

Observer critical of former U.S. President's first match

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Completely unaware of the 4/26 coffen mix-up in Washington, D.C., which sent the WWF's Undertaker to the Nixon funeral in

Southern California, and former U.S. President Nixon's coffin (with him in it) to the D.C. Arena, Dave Meltzer, in the 5/2 issue of his Wrestling Observer Newsletter, criticized the WWF saying that the "**replacement**" for Undertaker was, apparently, so nervous, he wouldn't get out of the casket until Mr. Fuji and James E. Cornette grabbed him by the ankles and wrists and tossed him over the ropes, that he worked "**stiffer**" than a board, looked incredibly "**green**," had no moves whatsoever, infact never "**moved**" during the entire match, was dressed in a "**suit**" that looked like it had been borrowed from I.R.S. and "**slept in**" overnight, that he "**laid down**" the entire match like a "**dead**" man doing nothing to sell Yokozuna's butt-drop (except when he uttered a sound that sounded like "**Ooof!**") and that the match was a "**stinking**" DUD, one that "**smelled**" so bad everyone at ringside was literally holding their noses as if someone in the ring had just "**died!**"

According to a recent comment in the *Observer*, Mexican wrestling fans, most of them anyway, may no longer throw coins into the ring (after nearly knocking out Cien Caras' eye) but I can testify from first hand experience that, in San Jose, Lucha fans not only throw coins, and soft drinks, and cups of beer with greater accuracy than any of the best head hunters in the National Baseball League, but when it comes to them accurately throwing hot dogs, tubs of popcorn, and Huggies Disposables (full of fresh baby shit from the rafter-seats), most of them are so good at it, they could replace the NFL's Joe Montana in an instant the next time he's sidelined.

Since we have not yet been to a Lucha card in Mexico, we're unsure if Mexican fans throw baby shit at wrestlers when the matches are being held down there, but their brudders up in L.A. (and their cousins further up in San Jose, during the last two cards I attended), have turned the throwing of huge quantities of ripe baby crap into an "art form"--with Art Barr as the "form" they love to throw it at the most!

Does Art Barr even do planchas?

I know he does "eyes." Scary eyes, man! *Killer eyes!* The kind of Original Shiek-Jimmy Snuka-Diamond Dallas Page "eyes" that if you're at ringside, and you're even thinking about throwing a coke into his face, and he's looking directly at you with those wild scare-the-Beetlejuice-out-of--your-ancestor's-loins "eyes," you suddenly find yourself thinking twice about throwing a coke at him, and you swallow your gum (and macho pride) and wish you were wearing a pair of Huggies yourself, as (at the particular moment of eye contact) you turn, barely without thinking about it, and find yourself dumping your jumbo-sized coke on the people sitting next to you (as if doing it is what you'd planned to do all along) and, as your furious neighbors begin beating and stomping and kicking the crap out of you with fists, boots, and chairs, you feel lucky...no, thankful...no, glad to be alive, and grateful, too! Grateful that you no longer have to look into Art Barr's seriously malevolent, menacing eyes.

How scary are Love Machine's "eyes" when he enters the arena with loud, pounding, entrance music from David Lee Roth's "Jump!" blasting from giant rock concert speakers? With eye's like Art Barr's, he doesn't need planchas to get crowd reaction. All Art Barr has to do is stand behind the crowd barrier, face the technico fans, show them Kirk Douglas-teeth, do the thinly veiled "jerk-off" hand motion, and stare at them with those gleefully treacherous, maniacal eyes, and the response that explodes from that entire section is as if Starwars villian Darth Vader--licking his lips!--has just walked into a packed convention hall swarming with thousands of pissed-off Ewoks, Ewoks who are carrying in their arms hundreds of tiny, screaming, biting, clawing Ewok babies, the adult Ewoks suddenly knowing exactly what they are going do with all the loaded Huggies they'd been carrying around...

Scary eyes, man! Art Barr's... Scarier than Jack Nicholson being po'd at you and then wanting to play golf with you on the L.A. freeway!

(SNS)

Pro wrestling linked to executed serial killer's behavior!

CHICAGO, IL -- SNS has learned from a reader of this sheet who works at the Illinois State House of Corrections & Executions that, indeed, former U.S. Vice-President Dan Quayle was "correct" (that, indeed, puhtaytoe is spelled with an "e") and that during his "execution" by injection, serial killer John Wayne Gacy may have revealed a clue (as to what had warped his mind during his youth and influenced him to insidiously mislead, molest, and then torture his 32 known victims before killing them) when, as the injections were flowing into his blood stream, he deliriously uttered the words "Ladies and Gentlemen, due to the fact that it's against AWA rules to throw your opponent over the

top rope, thereby winning the belt, Commissioner Wally Carbo has deemed that Verne Gagne is still the Heavyweight Champion of the World..."

Following the sale of beer & coke, and wrestling masks (whenever AAA/IWC holds cards in L.A. or San Jose), the third hottest-selling concession items are, you guessed it, Huggies, adorned with the AAA/IWC logo! And when large families must make decisions as to which of their infants they'll take to the Lucha cards, the one's who get to go are usually the sons or daughters who can "load up" the most Huggies in the shortest period of time. Since Lucha shows in the states don't seem to last as long as Lucha shows south of the border (thank, God for small favors!), a leetle moochacho, or moochachus, who can shit a pile (on command!) is an asset at Lucha Libre matches.

(SNS)

Serial killer did not laugh at Sushi reader's death-bed Jokes!

CHICAGO, IL -- Sushi News Service also learned that serial killer John Wayne Gacy did not think it was funny when a reader of this sheet, who subscribes under the name Riki-Jack Kavorkian, Jr., and whose job it is to wear a hood over his head while administering a series of fatal injections into death row killers, put his mouth near Gacy's ear and whispered...

"Now, listen to me, fuck-wad. In this bottle, which is equipped with the first tube that runs into your arm, we've got a urine sample from Marty Jannetty which will paralyze you!

"In the second bottle we've got--surprise!--fluids from Hulk Hogan's missing HIV-test, which will put you to sleep!

"In the third bottle--for your dying pleasure!--we've got liquified breath from Harvey Whippleman and Bastian Booger, which is gonna kill your sorry mother-fucking ass!"

Gacy, lying on his back, his wrists strapped to the table, his eyes opened wide, a look of terror suddenly spreading across his face, then asked, "The fourth bottle, Riki-Jack! What's in the f-f-f-fourth bottle?!"

Was a puzzle solved for any of you when \$25 million was awarded to Chuck Austin?

Not because of the amount of the pay-off, which probably means Chuck made more money in 10-seconds as a hapless jobber than the Hulkster made in 10-years as the highest paid wrestler in the land, but because of Marty Jannetty's involvement! Not only was Jannetty a defendant on his own behalf, but more importantly, he also was a ("friendly") key witness for the company with the deep, deeeep, deeeeeeeeeeeep pockets! Interesting, how, after reportedly doing drugs, missing shows, hitting the bottle, and messing up time after time in the WWF, "friendly witness" Jannetty was constantly allowed to return to the WWF over the past few years when others of his calibre never would have been given second, third, or fourth chances. It never did make sense why Titan kept rolling out the "Welcome Back Marty" mat. (Ahhhh, but now we know. Puzzled solved.) It will be interesting to see how long Jannetty is kept around once Titan no longer needs his friendly testimony. But then stranger things have happened.

(SNS)

Serial killer Gacy given wrestling-styled 'burial'!

CHICAGO, IL -- "So, you want to know what's in the fourth bottle, eh Gacy? The one with this little black tube running into your arm..." said Riki-Jack Kavorkian, Jr., a reader of this sheet (and the hood-wearing chief executioner for the State of Illinois) who was assigned to give the permanent three-count to convicted serial killer John Wayne Gacy.

"Well," Gacy replied, rather conversationally for a man about to die. "I also want to know what kind of odd black-and-white Lucha Libre hood it is that you're wearing? La Parka's, perhaps? Personally, one of the clown masks worn by Los Payasos would have been my choice. But, yes, before you execute me, I'd like to know what's in the fourth bottle."

"Well, John..." whispered Kavorkian, "the good news is that the fourth bottle contains something I personally cooked up for you. Not only will it bring you back to eternal life--after they bury you!--but it will also deposit a tiny nuclear powered VCR-TV inside your brain which will play a tape of the infamous Hulk Hogan-Andre the Giant DUD match at WrestleMania!"

"Wh-wh-whaaaat?" Gacy muttered, as Mas_Sus! reader Riki-Jack

Kavorkian, Jr. fired the first injection into Gacy's bloodstream. "What's th-the baaaad news Riki- Jack?!"

"The tape will run forever, Gacy! Forever!!! You're going to have to watch it over and over again for as long as you live, which is about how long it will take the hungry little maggots inside this fifth bottle to chew on your sorry ass and crap out your demented soul from now through eternity!"

EDITORIAL...

Lucha Libre: The answer to what's wrong with U.S. graps? (Or a bridge between the Hulk Hogan-'Steroids Era' and whatever comes next?)

A month or so ago, in either the *Observer* or the *Torch*, around the time Dave Meltzer wrote his 4/4 editorial about newsletter coverage of Lucha Libre (the most popular and successful form of professional wrestling in North America), I remember reading a brief news footnote that WCW Veep Eric Bischoff had cancelled a meeting with representatives from the AAA Lucha Libre promotion and, instead, flew somewhere to meet with Hulk "The Answer to All Our Problems" Hogan who, apparently, was coming closer to signing his major deal with WCW.

After reading Meltzer's Lucha editorial, which, by the way, I agree with, it unsettled me that Bischoff elected, instead, to meet with the big-muscled blond guy who, in my opinion, represents more of what was once interesting and exciting about wrestling (as well as what also has been wrong with it) but who, today, is really more of what is now a part of wrestling's past, and, surely, is not someone I would count on as being a major long term component of what wrestling will look like in the United States in the future.

A pivotal decision?

When Bischoff failed to meet with the funny speaking Lucha guys from AAA, it occurred to me that he had just made one of those incredibly important and pivotal decisions (and possible mistakes) in life and business which could certainly color the shape and texture of WCW's near term future, if not the future of major-league pro wrestling in the United States for years to come.

Since the news blurb did not mention why WCW and AAA were meeting, I can only assume the proposed topic was something as simple as the two companies wanting to discuss talent trades, except I'm not so sure who AAA would want, relative to who WCW had under contract at the time, unless AAA wants some stereotypical American heels to play major "rudo" gringo roles in Mexico, where (to some degree because of his reputation) Jake Roberts and (to an incredible degree because of his work ethic and ability to create heat) Art Barr, who wrestles as the brawling and hated American flag-waving "Love Machine" (along with two red, white & blue-apparelled partners, Eddy Guerrero & Black Cat, not exactly your stereotypical White Anglo-Saxon "Ugly Americans"), are over in a big way, with Barr being over monsterously big, creating the most heat in any building on any given night in Mexico, and, in my opinion, at the AAA/IWC shows in San Jose last year, creating the most heat I can recall seeing in person since the days when the state-of-the-art-nasty heel Ray Stevens used to drive Hispanic-American fans into a frenzy at the S.F. Cow Palace where they actually thought he was killing their hero Pepper Gomez.

Skepticism

Of course, if a talent trade was going to be the topic of discussion between the two promotions, my skepticism about how WCW would use the Lucha stars immediately comes to mind, since today's American promotions almost always misuse, or at least do not seem to know how to get the most "pop" out of traded talent, unless the talent is used in the tired and not very earth shaking (or arena-filling) stereotypical ways foreign talent has always been used, ie., like Yokozuna is used in the role as the Japanese "devil" which Mr. Fuji and dozens like him have played before, or like Muta, the face-painted green-liquid-spraying foreign gimmick who, at one time was pushed, but not well enough nor to the point where his presence was responsible for putting a lot of butts into seats or very many \$24.95 digits on Cable-TV bills.

Actually, this description of how Mexican Lucha Libre talent might be used, as it relates to WCW under the helm of Bischoff, may not be a fair one.

To his credit, Bischoff has demonstrated in a relatively short period that he thinks ahead, is creative, is not anywhere near brainwashed by the mindset that says what worked in the '70s will work in the '90s, and, I'm sure, were he to implement Lucha at WCW, he would push his booking committee to seriously recognize that the Lucha Libre "style" of wrestling, as well as the Luchadores themselves, represent something that would look new, fresh, wild, and exciting on the weekly TV shows, and if programmed wisely and booked creatively and given

a significant, no, make that a very significant push--since Lucha is something that the WWF is not doing right now--Lucha Libre is something that could make a major impact on WCW's TV ratings and subsequent arena attendance and PPV buy rates, without the help of Hulk Hogan, or at least long after Hogan's re-activated, but still tired, old star has begun to fade.

Pillman in a Lucha mask?

Okay.

I'm convinced.

Bring on the Luchadores and Lucha Libre! Pack WCW's cards with them! Put wild masks and elaborate costumes on white wrestling-flyers like Brian Pillman and Chris Benoit! Hire and disguise some of lighter weight 1-2-3 Kid-types out there who, in wrestling schools and small local promotions like the one former pro wrestler Woody Farmer runs in Hayward, CA, have been practicing and performing amazing Lucha stuff for a couple of years now.

___You tell me.

Pretend you are a semi-hardcore WCW mark, or a mainstream WWF fan, or just a simple-minded-idiot who got tired of the same old, tired old, same old, bullshit action we've all been subjected to for the past several years and, only, unlike the rest of us who've hung in there like addicts waiting for the "miracle" American fix that never comes, you (as this mark) have had the good sense to abandon ship and seek other things that amuse. It's been a year or more since you've really sat through an entire hour of Superstars or Saturday Night, and even though you've caught a couple minutes here and there of RAWs or Clashes, it's been a long while since you've purchased a ticket to a house show or a PPV, with the last one you saw being one of the Mania's where Hulk Hogan, well, where the big fella just didn't do it for you anymore and you've been on hiatus ever since.

So, it's Saturday afternoon (or early evening out on the East Coast) and you are channel hopping, half-heartedly, not really paying attention, when you hear the familiar refrains of Tony Schivone or Jesse the Body (or Bobby Heenan or Gene Okerlund) and, lo' and behold, one of them is interviewing the big muscled blond guy of yesteryear, and he is oiled up and flexing and making the big eyes and sneering into the camera and talking about the new demandments and some kind of vague feud with Ric Flair.

In one way or another, back then when those two were on top, about the time when you as the mark turned off to wrestling a year or so ago, here they are once again, back in your face. But they are on WCW now and, well, that's different, so what the hey, you stand there for a bit (the remote control channel-switcher ready to fire) and you watch for a while, maybe even returning next time to catch parts of a few weekly shows down the road to see if the feud is going anywhere different than before.

But (and this is the jist of my thesis) are you really excited?

Are you saying things like, "Hot damn! Hogan and Flair! Son of a gun!"

Are you picking up your cellular phone to call your old wrestling buddy, the one who, like you, also disappeared from the scene about the same time you did? And do you find yourself saying to him, "Hey, Elwood! Turn on WCW Saturday Night! Yeah, that show we used to watch all the time!" (or "never watched!" depending on whether you pair of rocket scientists were WWF marks or WCW marks.) Do you find yourself yelling into the phone, "Hulk Hogan is back! Hulk Hogan has returned! We're not worthy! All is right with the world!"

Or, let's say the second senario begins the same as the one above, when you switch to the WCW show, and jarring you out of your Nike's--like a sudden slap in the face!--is a besides himself Tony Schivone, or Heenan, etc., going ape shit, and there on the screen is this wild, Americanized version of Lucha Libre with these normal-sized guys who look like they've stepped out of a technicolored-spandex-nightmare and who, in the space of three minutes, show more mind-blowing moves, unbelievable bumps, and aerial displays than found in the last three years of WCW-WWF highlight films put together! And then do you find yourself picking up the phone and calling Elwood and sputtering things like, "Crazy man! Incredible! Doing sutff like I've never seen in my whole f---ing life! The crowd's going nuts! Turn to TBS, man! Turn that sumbitch TV on and call me back!!!"

Goose bumps on tit?

Like I started to say. You tell me.

Which of the two senarios above has the better chance of happening were either alternative provided? Which show is going to have the best chance of growing goose bumps on bored nipples? Or at least cause the mark, or whatever, to lean forward a little and find out what the hell has just come to town, where to get tickets, and what time the damn gates open!

Right now, I don't know how many of you get Lucha on cable, or watch Lucha via tapes, or if you get (or got) it via your dishes, but the times when both of my TV sets are turned

on during Saturday afternoons, with the TV in the bedroom tuned to WCW and the TV in the livingroom showing Lucha, more and more this past year one of them is playing with the sound turned off (with the VCR making the only noise in the room) and, I'll give you a hint, it's not the TV set emitting even one sentence that I can understand. And, except for the word "taco" I wouldn't know what those Mexican versions of Okerlund, Schivone, and Ventura are saying even if my life depended on it! (I'm not bragging about my ignorance, or inability to speak a language which 20% or more of the people in this area speak. Hell, I'm just trying to make a point.)

___Okay, in my zest to make a point, I'm leaving something out. And I'm sure I'll hear about it. So, sure, what if after Lucha "arrives" here in the states (beyond what the IWC's Arezzi and Skolar are doing with AAA, and aside from what EMLL-MWF initiated in L.A.), after all of the hoopla and push and after all the money is spent, after the names and story-lines and feuds are Americanized, after it carves out a toe hold with major television behind it, what if the Lucha style does not have "legs," and instead of being a marathon runner, it turns out to be a sprinter, strong for the short term but without the wind to go the distance in terms of three or more years, and that the ratings, and gates, and PPV buys slowly recede to current levels? Would the Lucha experiment be considered a failure? Something that should not even have been tried in the first place? I think not.

Maybe, in once sense, if Lucha in the U.S. did not last more than a couple years, it could be considered a failure, if you always look at the bottom line, the short-term bottom line that is, and you never look down the road or you never address the the need to build strong foundations, or rebuild upon the foundations that once did their job but are no longer viable, or maybe were never really good foundations to begin with.

Even though, lately, people like Vader, the Nasty Boys, Kevin Sullivan, and Cactus Jack-versus-anything-that's-not-nailed-down, are doing their best to shift or revive wrestling's image, current wrestling product in the U.S., no matter how you view it or how you think it is changing, is still primarily a product that gives mainstream wresling fans big muscles and freakish physiques which have been programmed into their heads for the past decade as generally being what wrestling is all about.

In other words, and here is where Meltzer and Keller have been on target with their zeal to report and analyze the FBI indictments of Vince McMahon. If all goes as the Feds plan it, beginning in July, thanks to steroids, and thanks to the mainstream public's surely negative reaction to the very public trial and side-show issues (sexual harrassment, molestations, untrained-crippled jobbers, etc.) which will accompany the trial publicity (unless McMahon pulls a miracle), the very foundation upon which modern day wrestling has been built and sold (mega-muscled-monsters "allegedly" tanked on steroids), and wrestling itself, as we have come to know it nationally, will more than likely begin (or continue) to seriously crumble beyond anything we have seen in the past few years.

Hulk Hogan, the living embodiment of big muscles, freakish physiques, and steroids? He's the answer? The Hulkster, as Moses, is going to lead us to the promised land of grappling Nirvana? (I'll believe it when I see the Mississippi River part, run backwards, and/or be bottled and sold as drinking water in Mexico.)

What better time than now?

Actually, the way I see it, what better time than now for WCW to usher the "Era of Lucha Libre" into the U.S.A.?

Even if Lucha Libre only has a brief run (surely it would do as well as Hogan-Flair for the next year or so), the Lucha Libre style is the complete antithesis, the total opposite of the big-muscled steroids-associated wrestling of today, since Lucha Libre, at least the "flying" aspect of it, projects the image of supurbly trained, naturally built, normal, healthy-looking athletes who, apparently, have nothing to do with steroids or, more importantly, nothing to do with the big steroids trial on the East Coast which, again, unless Vince McMahon can pull a David Copperfield and, like magic, get his ass out of one big jam, will begin the day after the Fourth of July, producing possible fireworks that, for wrestling, might make what went on in the sky the night before seem like kiddie sparklers.

And, back to Lucha, if it was implemented in a serious way by WCW, what if Lucha-style did not last longer in popularity with the ticket and PPV-buying mainstreamers than a year or so?

It is still far better for wrestling as a genre, for the long term future of wrestling to find itself having to recover from Lucha burn-out, rather than for wrestling to have to recover from a big steroids ravaged wasteland and have to, first, recapture its audience, and then re-train its audience which has been overdosed the past decade or more on wrestling as interpreted by big-muscled steroid freaks (or in the case of Ric Flair, by an era of workers

who, while they are still gifted and wonderful talents, have simply, and nationally, been over-exposed.

In other words, even as "the" trial is going on, even as government witnesses and the news media begins to dredge up the horrors of steroids-past, or when the news cameras turn to find out what's going on in TED TURNER'S promotion, WCW should be showing the world an almost totally different kind of wrestling, one that is based more on nimble athleticism vs 21-inch pythons, one that looks so unlike what Americans have been used to seeing over the past ten years, that the public's interest in the trial cannot help but shift to what's going on at WCW. And if Lucha Libre-styled wrestling is not the all-encompassing long term answer for the sport here in the U.S., it still beats anything else out there as a unique, flashy, and almost thoroughly enjoyable vehicle to help wrestling (its mainstream, casual, or hardcore fans) make the transition from the "Steroid Era" to whatever era is next.

And the funny thing. If Bischoff (or whomever's left running Titan) doesn't do it? All AAA has to do is wake-up, hire some American vocal talent, like the Atlanta Boys (Craig Johnson, Steve Prazak, and Scott Hudson) formerly of Global Wrestling on ESPN and the now defunct *Shenanumake Post* to produce studio voice-overs of one-hour Lucha shows which, I have no doubt, would sell like hotcakes at the next national convention of U.S. television programmers and advertisers. (If this idea won't work, I'd really like to know why not. And if it does, remember where you heard it, sports entertainment faneetos!)

Lucha Notes: For those of you who have not yet seen Lucha Libre, because your TV does not receive it or because John Arezzi and Ron Skolar have not brought their AAA/IWC shows to your area, I suggest you pay close attention to plugs regarding Lucha tape dealers or traders in the *Observer's Readers' Pages* or in Sheldon Goldberg's *Mat Marketplace* and consider trading or buying a good six-hour Lucha tape. Even if you don't watch another Lucha tape after the first one, you'll get a good "visual" idea of what goes on and then whatever you read about Lucha after that should be more meaningful. Be sure to ask for "best of" or any regular Saturday Galavision shows from 1993-94... Recently, Sheldon's sheet and Evan Ginzburg's *Wrestling Then & Now* had Lucha nostalgia-articles and interviews written by Dr. Mike Lano. Don't overlook almost anything Lano does or his "Canvas Cavity" column in *Outside Interference* as being a source of Lucha commentary through the eyes of someone who's been an extremely active insider and fan of graps for years. Love him or hate him--even when he's sometimes out to lunch in left-field wearing a hat made of lightning rods during an electrical storm--Lano on a bad day still knows more about graps, grap history, and Lucha Libre than 92.3% of the rest of us on many good days combined. Statistical margin of error + or -2.3%

For those of you who have been hiding under a rock, or the 12 or 13 of you who recently discovered this sheet in FACT SHEET FIVE (and for some strange reason you've only subbed to this sheet and have not sampled others), here is sub info for newsletters mentioned above: Wrestling Observer Newsletter (\$6/4, \$12/8, \$18/12, etc.), Dave Meltzer, Editor, P.O. Box 1228, Campbell, CA 95009-1228..., Mat Marketplace, (\$2.50), Sheldon Goldberg, Editor, P.O. Box 2371 Jamaica Plains, MA 02130..., and Wrestling Then & Now (\$1.25), Evan Ginzburg, Editor, P.O. Box 640471, Oakland Gardens Station, Flushing, NY 11364...and Outside Interference(\$6/4), Dave Prazak, Editor, P.O. Box 4005, Lisle, IL 60532-4005,

I'd also start reading more closely the Lucha stuff that has been appearing in Meltzer's sheet, especially the information about AAA and their shows in the U.S. via Arezzi and Skolar. I've noticed that Meltzer is doing a bit more "subtle" education and explaining in his reports, thus, even if you are not obsessed with it, if you're curious and want to know the basics about what is going on, and you actually read it with the intent to become informed, instead of skimming over it like some people do the Japan news, you'll be able to appreciate and maintain an interest in where this branch of the sport is headed and how it will continue to dramatically affect the wrestling scene right here and right now, tomorrow and today, in the U.S., something Japanese wrestling has never really done and probaly won't do, since, unlike Japanese automobiles--and definitely unlike Lucha Libre--Japanese wrestling promotions are not on American television and, except for the minor Japanese tape market, the "live" product isn't being imported into the country in any significant degree, and therefore, it is neither competing with, nor supplementing the product offered by American promotions and, again, unlike Lucha, Japanese wrestling is neither a threat to these promotions nor a major player in this country which Lucha Libre via AAA/IWC (and to a small degree EMLL/MWF) already is.

Whereas his no punches pulled, no butts spared, "Ramblings"--like style is reminiscent of former *Arena Report* editor Ron Lemieux who became *The Real Wrestling Hotline's* new Wednesday Night option #2 columnist, a column which has become one of the best all-styles-of-

wrestling formats out there, featuring good Lucha commentary, is "Foreign Affairs" written by Dave Scherer...in Chairshots(\$1), Barry Rose, Editor, 10117 W. Oakland Park Blvd., #341 Sunrise, FL 33351... While I have not yet had a chance to speak with Torch columnist Chris Zavisa about this, I'll be surprised if he does not begin to blend more analysis about Lucha into his monthly Japan coverage (seeing as how much of the Japanese work is like Lucha) in the weekly Pro Wrestling Torch (\$2 ea., or \$15/10, \$36/25), Wade Keller, Editor, P.O. Box 201844, Minneapolis, MN 55420. It's only a matter of time, too, until other Torch columnists Carlie Gill, Bruce Mitchell, and Mark Madden, (if they're paying attention) pull themselves away from McMahon's problems and WCW's issues long enough to treat readers to one of their unique "spins" or "tours de farce" regarding Luchagrapas... Since Paul MacAuther was in town earlier this month and since we were appropriately eating burritos (while talking about Meltzer's Lucha editorial) at the Una Mas in San Jose, I also know that he and co-editor David Skolnick of Wrestling Perspective(\$1.50), P.O. box 401, Camillus, NY 13031-0401 (which will run a third installment of Paul's off-the-freaking-planet interview with Missy Hyatt) are themselves wrestling with whether to approach the subject of Lucha in months to come. Funny, for years I've been accused of stirring the pot so often in almost every issue of the old Sushi formats, but Meltzer writes a simple (well, not that simple) editorial about Lucha and, believe me, it's stirred-up more discussion, controversy, and dilemma within the predominantly U.S. grap covering underground media than this reincarnation of Sushi, and its editor, could stir-up in million years! No, despite emphasis on Lucha in this issue, and despite the fact we'll continue to devote space to Lucha in future issues (primarily because covering stuff I'm very interested in and really curious about is what I've always done) this sheet will continue to be as American as, uh...appaleeto pie and Tacocito Bell!

I pitchur Duthtee in Hol-eee-wuud, doan you seeee, goeen nutzz as Duthtin getzz heez ass brannndid by Ter-eeeeee!

Excuse me for dating this issue a few days later than May 23, which I'd targeted, and for having little room left but for these few thoughts regarding WCW's 5/22 SLAMBOREE in Philly, where I never thought I'd see a card where most of the matches were *** and better, but where all the matches featuring Ric Flair, Barry Windham, Larry Zybysko, Lord Steven Regal (one of my favorites because he's such a prune), Sting & Vader would all be ** or less, with Flair-Windham being a really unsettling *1/2 (Yes, the work rate was better than **, but I've never based match ratings on work rate, unless the work rate blows me away. When you see three or four stars in this sheet, it means there was something about the match that amused me, got my attention, evoked me to care about the outcome, to care about the health, safety, or welfare of at least one of the participants, etc. Not just workrate and not primarily workrate, unless, like I said, what is going on in the ring is grabbing me. I gave the Johnny B. Badd-Steve Austin opener ***1/2 because of what Austin was doing, the way he was so hyper, so determined, selling everything Badd threw at him, making me elevate my heretofore tepid feelings about him, making me feel like I was seeing an opening match that kicked ass, even though whatever feud was pushed between them was non-existent in my mind by the time they hooked up. Badd and Austin did something with their opener other than merely opening the show. They entertained me. Far from that, the Flair-Windham breather was just that, a transition match between the two hot gimmick matches. Ric Flair? A transition match worker?

Your 11 time World Champion who, with Hulk Hogan, you're going to rebuild the hopes of the company around? That's the strategy? That's how you "use" your champion? Whoever booked that match, is he on WCW payroll, or was this some kind of call the 900 number and enter your idea for WCW's "Book the Champ" match promotion? (Don't mind me, bruddahs, if I just sit here a moment, scratching scalp, getting a puzzled look on my face, and hoping that when I read this week's Observer, or the META ANALYZERS in Torch, that someone will explain it to me...)

Philly fans are, indeed, certifiably crazy, and just watching them work also helped make the show a solid thumbs up for me, especially watching that wild front row dude (John Clark? Paul Hanlin Jr? Mark Madden? or_?) who never let up all night, and whose straw hat Terry Funk destroyed after his moonsault-and-slap-city-highlighted ***1/2 destruction of Tully Blanchard. Funk is so much fun to watch... Zybysko should have just mopped the floor with Regal in 30-seconds and it would have been a great match instead of a disappointing *1/2... For me, the bull roper w/ Dustin Rhodes vs Bunkhouse Buck w/ Col.Parker built slowly to a ***1/2 surprise. Hope WCW had someone in "Hollywood" get video of Dusty going buhzurk when Funk ran back in... SLAMBOREE trivia question: What two things expose wrestling during a **** Nasties vs Kevin Sullivan-Cactus Jack title-change Bully Match? Answer: A referee-hocky star's knockout "punch" and an "aluminum foil" garbage can that works light!... After Gordon Solie's eloquent and tremulous tribute to the Hall of Fame inductees, especially Assassin, Ladd, & lately Race, I will never again knock Gordon, or laugh at anyone who does, as the depth of his love for pro graps and for the old and fading warriors who, I remember in my own youth from seeing them either live or reading about them in the Apter mags, climbed into the ring and accepted their honors with dignity, grace, and a subtle charm that brought a special sweet feeling of sadness to my heart. We're all getting older, folks. Time does fly. And it's truly a time like this when I'm glad there's still a great big part of me that is such a huge, frigging mark! ...WWF KING OF THE RING Trivia Question: If Sabu is coming to San Jose on 6/19, the same day King O' de Ring is on PPV, what would you do? I'll let you all know what I did, right after Fathers' Day. Hey, thanks for dropping by. --Jeff Mullins, Sushiland